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most of us will probably agree with the editor that it has had more attention than it deserved. The discussion over the blinding of the Aetheling Alfred is of great length and interest and attacks Freeman's defence of Godwine rather than Godwine himself, giving the great earl rather a Scotch verdict of not proven, than either condemning or exonerating him. We are spared any recapitulation of the Hastings controversy, though some notice of bibliography would have been useful and certainly not out of place. That no further note on Rollo occurs than a reference to the *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, and that as an afterthought, while more than a page and a half is given to the story of the three men in a boat who came to King Alfred (to take two instances only), may argue a difference in perspective in the editor and the reviewer; and certain other statements may argue a difference of opinion. But of the learning, the painstaking care, the fairmindedness, the general accuracy of judgment, and the extraordinary diligence shown in these pages there can be no question, and historian and philologist alike must recognize the profound debt of gratitude under which Mr. Plummer has placed them in such an admirable edition of so great a document.

WILBUR C. ABBOTT.

The Troubadours at Home. Their Lives and Personalities, their Songs and their World. By JUSTIN H. SMITH, Professor of Modern History in Dartmouth College. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1899. Two vols., pp. xxx, 493; v, 496.)

THESE two volumes form a history of Provençal lyric poetry in the Middle Ages. They discuss forty-nine of the most important Troubadours, with considerable detail, and give a passing mention to as many more. The author has based his work on the latest scientific investigations, has accumulated a bibliography of four hundred and eighty-eight titles, which precedes the text of the first volume, and has supplemented his narrative with explanatory and critical notes to the extent of one hundred and eighty-four pages. These figures are an indication of the care and attention bestowed on the purely scholarly side of the undertaking.

Professor Smith does not stop, however, with a history of literature only. He has in mind another object also, indicated by the title of his work, and intends to furnish his reader with a description of the environment of his poets. For this purpose he employs both picture and pen, and combines the facts which he has acquired by his study of the poems and their authors, with other material gathered during two visits to Provence, in which his camera was a faithful companion. So he tells the story of his tour and his work at the same time, and illustrates both by views of the places where his heroes fought and sang, or reproductions of their costume, their music or their manuscripts. A map at the head of each volume gives the itinerary; from Lyons and Grenoble on the east down the Rhone to the Mediterranean, east to Italy and west to Catalonia, then north through the towns in the basin of the Gironde to Cler-

mont-Ferrand on the Allier and Poitiers on the Clain. Such a direct observation of the surroundings and habitations of the Troubadours lends to their meagre records an illusion of fullness and life. All that remains of them in literature, tradition or nature is brought before us, in a concrete, vitalized form. Even their elusive melodies, often more attractive than the words which they accompanied, may be felt in the transcriptions into modern notation which have been made for this work. Their air is simple, rather plaintive and difficult to retain.

The idea of basing a popular narrative on a scientific foundation cannot be too highly praised. Literature, even on the historical side, is so generally treated from the subjective standpoint entirely that any deviation from the usual road is welcome. Our author is not lacking at all in imagination or invention. But he uses these faculties to piece out and embellish his statistics, not to take the place of facts. The notes indicate all such adornments. We have, then, before us a reliable account of Provençal lyric poetry, expressed in easy and familiar language, and made real by a successful attempt to restore the civilization which produced it. This last statement would naturally have some qualifications, particularly in the opening chapters, where, for instance, Raimbaut de Vaqueiras' modest verse is quite overwhelmed by the repeated allusions to Dante, Petrarch and poets of even a later day. But as the story runs along and gathers volume the references to other writers become less frequent and comparisons are made between the Troubadours themselves.

The translations of the individual poems are in keeping with the general plan of the volumes. Professor Smith does not aim at a literal rendering of word for word in his text—he reserves this exactness for the notes. But he does endeavor to transcribe the spirit of the lines and shows especial care in preserving the rhyme-system of the original, so that his reader may gain an appreciation of Provençal versification. He is also discriminating in his judgment of the part music played in Troubadour poetry, and insists on the irreparable loss which the poems have suffered in the disappearance of their musical setting.

Many fine pages might be cited as characteristic of the work. Among them the reconstitution of medieval Montpellier (I. 137), the personality of Arnaut de Maruelh (I. 143-146), the Albigenian heresy (I., Ch. XXII.), life in Troubadour times (II., Ch. XXXI.), and Bertrand de Born, the knight and the poet (II., Chs. XXXV., XXXVI.). Particularly well interpreted is the Troubadour idea of love, found in the chapter on Pons de Capduelh (II., Ch. XXVIII.).

There is hardly a criticism to be passed on Professor Smith's facts. Note 16 to Ch. XXXI., on the entertainment of visiting knights, should show that they were lodged with reputable burghers in the town and not by the lord at his castle. Of the tales woven into the tapestry at Ventadour (II. 159) it is probable that only the story of Tristan and Yseult was popular at the time mentioned.

We think there is more doubt regarding the wisdom of the method of presentation adopted and the arrangement of the material. It is a diffi-

cult task at best to reconstruct a past era. In the present instance this difficulty has been increased by the description of a modern journey and by views of modern towns and medieval ruins. The reason for choosing this plan is obvious; to attract the public at large, and induce it to accept historical truth under guise of an entertaining journal of travel. The genuine student cannot complain, for he is recompensed by a synoptical table of contents which refers to an excellent index. Yet we must confess it took a large part of the narrative to really introduce us to the main purpose of the author, and we are inclined to believe that the other method of writing history "down," instead of backward, is more effectual, and at the same time quite as popular. For instance, the Troubadours' geography is first established by Professor Smith in Volume II. (pp. 20-22), their daily life first sketched—medieval life in general—in Chapter XXXI., likewise in Volume II., their language first explained on pages 175-177 of the same volume, and so on.

The same objection might be urged against the arrangement of the material. Professor Smith starts his tour with the Rhone valley and ends it at Poitiers. But the Rhone valley has not handed down any poet of the first epoch of Provençal literature (see Vol. II. p. 358), and only one good writer, Raimbaut d'Aurenza (II. 359) of the second. Such a way of presenting the subject increases our interest by leading us from the minor authors up to the principal ones, and when we finally reach the earliest Troubadour of them all, William IX., we enjoy the well-prepared climax. But this climax occurs in the next to the last chapter of the second volume, and the plan though dramatic has the serious defect of inverting history.

The self-imposed questions of the origin of art in Provençal poetry, and of its deference to women Professor Smith answers by crediting William IX. with the former and Bernart de Ventadorn with the latter (II. 354, 356-357). William IX. certainly valued an artistic stanza and undoubtedly contributed towards establishing an artistic versification. But it is probable that court poetry—which implies a certain element of art—had existed before William's day, and that his poems alone of their generation have survived because of his rank and his descendants. There is surely no trace of the songs of the people in them. Nor could Bernart de Ventadorn have "established" the fashion of deferring to women. The poet Marcabru, who had left the stage before Bernart entered upon it, complains that the true service of women had fallen away in his time and evil wooing had taken its place. This evidence, of itself, would seem to set the honoring of the sex back into a period antedating Marcabru's activity, much more Bernart's.—The make-up of the volumes is excellent and the index exact and comprehensive.

F. M. WARREN.